



City of Seattle

Gregory J. Nickels, Mayor

Seattle Office for Civil Rights

Germaine W. Covington, Director

Civil Rights Historical Milestones in Seattle

- ✓ 1963 - Marked the beginning of the housing struggle in Seattle. A presidential order banning discrimination in the sale of federally financed housing was signed. In the spring, Seattle Mayor Gordon Clinton proposed a Seattle Human Rights Commission. It was composed of 12 volunteer members appointed by the Mayor and the City Council and staffed by a Director and Secretary.
- ✓ 1968 - April 19, 1968, was the date Seattle's Fair Housing Ordinance was unanimously passed. It gave the Seattle Human Rights Commission the responsibility to receive and investigate complaints, determine whether discrimination actually existed, and to attempt to resolve complaints through conciliation. By the end of 1968, 22 cities in the state of Washington had adopted similar housing ordinances.
- ✓ 1970 - "Ancestry" was added to the Housing Ordinance as a protected class.
- ✓ 1971 - Saw the establishment of Seattle's Office for Women's Rights (OWR). Its mission was to promote economic and social equity for women and sexual minorities.
- ✓ 1972 - "Sex" was added to the housing ordinance as protected class.
- ✓ 1973 - On October 18, the Fair Employment Practices Ordinance was adopted by the City. Protected classes in the employment ordinance included: "race," "color," "sex," "marital status," "sexual orientation," "political ideology," "age," "creed," "religion," "ancestry," and "national origin."
- ✓ 1975 - "Sexual orientation" and "political ideology" were added to the City's Housing Ordinance as protected classes.
- ✓ 1979 - "Parental status" and "age" were added to the City's Housing Ordinance as protected classes.
- ✓ 1980 - The women and Minority Business Enterprise (WMBE) Ordinance was adopted.
- ✓ 1984 - On February 15, Seattle Mayor Charles Roger signed his Executive Order Affirming the Right of All Citizens to Receive City Services Equally. This

Order prohibits discrimination by any City administrator, employee, agency or department in providing City services or award of City contracts.

- ✓ 1987 - Seattle's Housing Ordinance becomes Seattle's Open Housing and Public Accommodations Ordinance, adding protections against discrimination in public accommodations. This also the year that the "use of service dog by a handicapped person" was added as a protected class.
- ✓ 1995 - The administration of WMBE ordinance moved to the Department of Administrative Services which already handled City contracting and purchasing functions. The Seattle Human Rights Department concentrated its efforts on the investigative process, and advocacy and outreach efforts.
- ✓ 1996 - Saw the merging of the Seattle Office for Women's Rights and the City's Human Rights Department to form the Seattle Office for Civil Rights.